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Secretary Gassman Announces More Than \$24,000 in Youth Apprenticeship Grants for Mid-State Technical College

Funding this fall will set students on career paths to good paying jobs

Plover – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced \$24,109 in Youth Apprenticeship grants that will let Plover and Stevens Point area high school students combine employment and classroom instruction, explore career options, and set a course for jobs with a future, good pay, and benefits.

"The Youth Apprenticeship Program is a critical part of our overall strategy to ensure Wisconsin has a workforce that is second to none," Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman said. "Youth apprenticeship is a great way to help our students broaden their horizons. Whether a student is on a college track or plans to head directly to work, youth apprenticeship offers the opportunity to learn hands-on skills in their chosen career path. Students can enter the youth apprenticeship program and develop strong skills that lead to jobs that pay family-supporting wages. This is a valuable program that deserves recognition and support."

The \$24,109 in grants will fund local business and education partnerships throughout the region and is administered locally by Mid-State Technical College. Youth apprenticeship programs in the area include Architectural Design, Auto Technician, Drafting/Engineering, Finance, Health Services, Information Technology, Manufacturing/Machining, Production Agriculture: Animals, and Production Agriculture: Soils & Crops. More than 9,000 statewide students have graduated from the Youth Apprenticeship Program since it began in 1992.

Secretary Gassman announced the grant during a visit to D&D Mods & Rods Automotive where two Automotive Maintenance Technicians graduates completed their apprenticeships and are now working there.

Said Gassman, "The Governor's **Grow Wisconsin: 2005 Agenda** called for increased funding for the state's Youth Apprenticeship program so that we can put our youth on a path toward work that allows them to gain new skills and earn a living."

Student apprentices work part-time and take related classes in addition to their regular coursework. Program graduates earn a state skill certificate and receive credit at many technical colleges and universities for their program experience. In surveys, apprenticeship graduates say the program gave them a solid head start on their chosen careers while earning money working in their area of interest. Employers like the program because it helps them "grow their own" skilled workforce.

For more information on the program, go to <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dws/programs/ya/> or call (608) 267-7210 for names of local coordinators.

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